

Profile of the Guava Growers of Ahmednagar District of Maharashtra

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(Received : 05.05.2026 Accepted : 30.07.2026)

Abstract

The present study was undertaken with the objective to study the profile characteristics of guava growers in Ahilyanagar district of Maharashtra state. The study was conducted in Rahata and Kopargaon tahsils of Ahilyanagar district. A total of 120 guava growers were selected by using purposive and random sampling techniques. Ex-post facto research design was used for conducting the study. The data were collected through personal interview method with the help of a pre-tested interview schedule. The collected data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents (64.17%) belonged to middle age group, 39.17 per cent had higher secondary education, 57.50 per cent were farming experience, 56.67 per cent had Medium (4.01 ha to 10.00 ha) land holding, 67.50 per cent had medium annual income, 49.17 per cent had medium area under guava cultivation, 73.34 per cent had medium experience in guava cultivation, 50.00 per cent had average mass media exposure, 29.17 per cent had poor social participation and 53.34 per cent had poor extension contact.

Key words : Profile, Guava Growers, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra.

Guava (*Psidium guajava* L.), belonging to the family Myrtaceae, is one of the most important fruit crops cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions of the world. India is one of the leading producers of guava, and the area under guava cultivation has increased substantially over the years due to its high economic returns and adaptability to diverse agro-climatic conditions. In Maharashtra, guava cultivation has emerged as an important horticultural enterprise contributing significantly to farmers' income and employment generation. Understanding the profile characteristics of guava growers is essential for designing suitable extension strategies and improving production and marketing efficiency. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to analyse the profile characteristics of guava growers in Ahilyanagar district of Maharashtra state.

Objective

To study the profile characteristics of the

guava growers of Ahilyanagar district of Maharashtra state.

Material and Methods

The present study was conducted in Ahilyanagar district of Maharashtra state. The Rahata and Kopargaon tahsils were purposively selected because of their higher area and production under guava cultivation. From each tahsil, villages having maximum area under guava cultivation were selected. Twenty guava growers from each selected village were randomly selected, constituting a total sample of 120 respondents. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The data were collected through personal interviews using a pre-tested interview schedule. The collected data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient.

Results and Discussion

Age

Table 1. Distribution of the guava growers according to their age

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Young (Up to 35)	19	15.83
Middle (36-53)	77	64.17
Old (54 and above)	24	20.00
Total	120	100.00

The data presented in Table 1 revealed that the majority of the guava growers (64.17%) belonged to the middle age group, followed by 20.00 per cent belonging to old age and young categories, respectively. It can be inferred that middle-aged farmers were more actively engaged in guava cultivation due to their better physical ability, farming experience, and willingness to adopt improved cultivation and marketing practices. The probable reason might be that younger individuals prefer employment and business opportunities, while older farmers have reduced participation in intensive farming activities. The findings are in conformity with the findings reported by previous studies on horticultural crop growers.

Education

Table 2. Distribution of the guava growers according to their educational status

Education	Freq-	Per-
	uency	centage
Primary school (Up to 5 th standard)	3	2.50
Middle school (6 to 8 th Standard)	3	2.50
Secondary school (9 th to 10 th Standard)	30	25.00
Higher secondary (11 th to 12 th Standard)	47	39.17
Graduation and above	37	30.83
Total	120	100.00

The data in Table 2 indicated that the majority of the respondents (39.17 per cent) had completed higher secondary education, followed

by graduation and above (30.83 per cent), secondary education (25.00 per cent), middle school (2.50 per cent) and primary education (2.50 per cent). None of the respondents were illiterate. It may be concluded that the majority of guava growers possessed moderate to high educational levels. The probable reason might be increased awareness among farming families regarding the importance of education for adopting modern agricultural technologies and improving socio-economic status. Education enables farmers to access scientific information and make better management decisions.

Occupation

Table 3. Distribution of the guava growers according to their occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture	86	71.66
Agriculture + Subsidiary	16	13.34
Agriculture + Service	12	10.00
Agriculture + Business	6	5.00
Total	120	100.00

The data revealed that the majority of the guava growers (71.66 per cent) depended solely on agriculture, whereas 13.34 per cent were engaged in agriculture with subsidiary occupations, 10.00 per cent combined agriculture with service, and 5.00 per cent combined agriculture with business. This indicates that agriculture continues to be the principal occupation among guava growers. The probable reason may be that guava cultivation provides a stable source of income and employment opportunities to farming households.

Land Holding

The findings indicated that the majority of guava growers (56.67 per cent) possessed medium land holdings, followed by semi-medium (32.50 per cent), small (6.67 per cent), marginal (2.50 per cent), and big holdings (1.67 per cent).

Table 4. Distribution of the guava growers according to their land holding

Category	Freq- uency	Percen- tage
Marginal (Up to 1.00 ha)	3	2.50
Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	8	6.67
Semi medium (2.01 to 4.00 ha)	39	32.50
Medium (4.01 ha to 10.00 ha)	68	56.67
Large (10.01 ha and above)	2	1.67
Total	120	100.00

It can be concluded that guava cultivation is predominantly practiced by medium and semi-medium farmers. The probable reason might be that guava is a high-value fruit crop that provides better returns even on smaller holdings.

Annual Income

Table 5. Distribution of the guava growers according to their annual income

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	18	15.00
Medium	81	67.50
High	21	17.50
Total	120	100.00

The data showed that the majority of the guava growers (67.50 per cent) belonged to the medium annual income category, followed by high income (17.50 per cent) and low income (15.00 per cent). The findings indicate that despite commercial cultivation, most guava growers earn relatively medium income due to fluctuations in market prices, input costs, and productivity levels.

Area under Guava Cultivation

The findings revealed that 49.17 per cent of guava growers had 2 to 4 hectare area under guava cultivation, followed by 35.00 per cent with 1.01 to 2.00 hectares, 10.83 per cent with 4 to 10 hectares and 5.00 per cent with up to 1

Table 6. Distribution of the guava growers according to area under guava cultivation

Category	Freq- uency	Percen- tage
Marginal (Up to 1.00 ha)	6	5.00
Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	42	35.00
Semi medium (2.01 to 4.00 ha)	59	49.17
Medium (4.01 ha to 10.00 ha)	13	10.83
Large (10.01 ha and above)	0	0.00
Total	120	100.00

hectare area. The probable reason might be the semi medium size of operational land holdings and diversification of crops by farmers.

Experience in Guava Cultivation

Table 7. Distribution of the guava growers according to their experience in guava cultivation

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	7	5.83
Medium	88	73.34
High	25	20.83
Total	120	100.00

The data revealed that the respondents (73.34 per cent) had medium experience in guava cultivation, followed by high (20.83 per cent) and low experience (5.83 per cent). This indicates that many growers have recently adopted guava cultivation due to its profitability and market demand. The probable reason may be the recent expansion of guava cultivation in the study area.

Mass Media Exposure

The findings revealed that majority of the respondents (79.17 per cent) had average mass media exposure, followed by good exposure (10.83 per cent). This indicates that mass media plays an important role in disseminating information related to guava cultivation and

Table 8. Distribution of the guava growers according to their mass media exposure

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	12	10.00
Medium	95	79.17
High	13	10.83
Total	120	100.00

marketing. The probable reason may be increased access to mobile phones, internet services, television, and social media platforms among farmers.

Social Participation

Table 9. Distribution of the guava growers according to their social participation

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very Poor	29	24.17
Poor	35	29.17
Average	30	25.00
Good	14	11.66
Very Good	12	10.00
Total	120	100.00

The data indicated that 29.17 per cent of the respondents had poor social participation, followed by average social participation (25.00 per cent). The probable reason may be the lack of active involvement in farmer organizations, cooperatives, and social institutions. Increased social participation can facilitate better access to information, resources, and collective marketing opportunities.

Extension Contact

The findings revealed that the majority of the guava growers (53.34%) had poor extension contact, followed by average extension contact (34.16%). This suggests that extension services related to guava cultivation and marketing are not adequately reaching farmers. The probable reason might be inadequate extension

Table 10. Distribution of the guava growers according to their extension contact

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very Poor	10	8.34
Poor	64	53.34
Average	41	34.16
Good	3	2.50
Very Good	2	1.66
Total	120	100.00

personnel, limited training programmes, and low participation of farmers in extension activities. Strengthening extension services may improve knowledge dissemination and adoption of improved practices among guava growers.

Conclusion

The study revealed that the majority of guava growers belonged to the middle age category and had higher secondary education. Most of the respondents were engaged in agriculture with small land holdings and low annual income. The majority had low experience in guava cultivation, average mass media exposure, poor social participation and poor extension contact. These profile characteristics should be considered while formulating extension programmes, training activities and policy interventions for improving guava production and marketing efficiency among growers.

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